

Knowledge Management Inventory

1. Describe your knowledge sharing activity.

Major E-Learning Initiative:

The Learning Support Division will implement worldwide E-Learning to all employees in December 2002.

- USAID acquired 7000 training seats using SkillSoft courseware through an Interagency Agreement with the Department of Transportation.
- SkillSoft is one of the major corporations whose product is used under the E-Gov initiative "Go-Learn".
- The SkillSoft course catalog now includes almost 700 courses that cover an array of topics, including administrative support courses, business law, communication, customer service, human resources, leadership, management, e-business, financial management, project management, and even 12 courses on knowledge management. (These are only a few of the broad course topics that are available).
- All categories of USAID's workforce will have access to the 700+ courses at no cost to the employee or their organization.
- New courses are continually being added to the catalog every month at no additional cost to USAID.

During implementation, the training office is using emails plus a web-based communication forum created by IRM/CIS on the Extranet, so that USAID missions, the training office and SkillSoft can have threads of discussion, post documents, etc. to share knowledge/information/problems. Anyone can join the forum. Each overseas location (and all Washington Bureaus) have designated implementation points-of contact to participate in the roll-out.

Once employees have access to the training web site (will be known as "USAID's E-Learning Institute"), trainees will also have access to communication forums and chats to continue to learn from other trainees or have access to "experts" if there is a concern/question on any course topic (guaranteed 48 hour response time), etc. USAID also has the option of identifying experts to participate in this knowledge sharing activity, if desired.

SkillSoft also customizes training, so USAID has an option of asking the company to create courseware unique to USAID's business environment,

and/or USAID can partner within the "Go-Learn" government community to customize training unique to the government

In addition, the newest option offered by SkillSoft that is under consideration is called Books 24X7, which provides online electronic books from all major publishing companies to use in conjunction with e-learning. Combined with a high powered search engine, Books 24X7 permits employees to search any business topic and get instant results/answers to their inquiries with full text of the published book and their word search "highlighted". If USAID chooses to acquire Books 24X7 as part of its continued growth in E-Learning, SkillSoft has offered to try to include published books that would be especially useful to USAID's development community. USAID would provide the ISBN and publisher and SkillSoft, through Books 24X7, will ask permission of the publisher to publish the electronic version as a reference tool.

2. Value - Just in time training with any where, any time access. Training is Internet based, so with an ID/password in hand, an employee can access training any place there is Internet connectivity. Courses can also be downloaded on lap tops should someone want to take a course while traveling in the air, etc.
3. Benefits - ALL USAID employees. We expect that the courses offered will create value for the Agency by supporting USAID's business objectives, along with supporting USAID's core values of teamwork and participation, valuing diversity, customer service, results management and empowerment and accountability.
4. Future implications/issues - Costs are minimal per employee, so do not anticipate any significant budget constraints. **Marketing will play a major factor in getting the word out, keeping folks enthused, monitoring usage,** etc. Currently we plan to use the HR/SkillSoft Forum created by IRM/CIS to communicate marketing ideas, share stories, etc. (i.e., see attached one-page flyer regarding Doug Arbuckle). The training office held its first "open house" on November 5 to demonstrate the SkillSoft product to all HR employees and Bureau administrative officers. We plan to hold many other demonstrations in the next couple of months so folks can be more informed of the product and its capabilities.

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